



Department of Homeland Security Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report for 13 January 2009

Current Nationwide
Threat Level is



[For info click here](http://www.dhs.gov/)
<http://www.dhs.gov/>

- KOVR 13 Sacramento reports that radical animal rights activists have threatened to send letter bombs to two University of California at Davis researchers. (See item [16](#))
- According to the Wall Street Journal, an Ohio company recalled its creamy peanut butter after Minnesota health authorities identified the sandwich spread as the likely source of a wave of salmonella infections in the state. (See item [17](#))

DHS Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report Fast Jump

Production Industries: [Energy; Chemical; Nuclear Reactors, Materials and Waste;](#)
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Service Industries: [Banking and Finance; Transportation; Postal and Shipping;](#)
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Sustenance and Health: [Agriculture and Food; Water; Public Health and Healthcare](#)

Federal and State: [Government Facilities; Emergency Services; National Monuments and](#)
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Energy Sector

Current Electricity Sector Threat Alert Levels: Physical: ELEVATED,
Cyber: ELEVATED

Scale: LOW, GUARDED, ELEVATED, HIGH, SEVERE [Source: ISAC for the Electricity Sector (ES-ISAC) –
<http://www.esisac.com>]

1. *January 11, Treasure Coast Palm* – (Florida) **Protesters arrested at FPL's Indiantown power plant.** A group of 17 protesters were arrested Saturday after law enforcement said they trespassed on property belonging to Florida Power & Light Co. (FPL) and the Cayman Cattle Company in western Martin County, Florida. The group, which calls themselves Everglades Earth First!, had been protesting at the FPL's Martin County power plant, one of the largest fossil-fueled power plants nationwide. According to a recent release from the group, Everglades Earth First! is claiming that materials from FPL could be damaging old growth cypress trees in the Barley Barber Swamp close to the power plant. The protests outside the Barley Barber Swamp began January 5 after requests by the group to be permitted access to view the swamp were denied by FPL. The charges against the protesters ranged from trespassing to resisting arrest

without violence.

Source: <http://www.tcpalm.com/news/2009/jan/11/protestors-arrested-fpls-indiantown-power-plant/>

2. *January 9, Associated Press* – (Georgia) **Utility plans safety upgrades to Savannah's grid.** Georgia Power will have a plan by the end of January for short-term safety upgrades to the aging electrical grid in downtown Savannah, where underground cable fires have sparked two explosions since August. Possible improvements could include restraints to anchor manhole covers and temperature gauges to monitor for overheating cables. Two weeks ago, a cable caught fire beneath the street in Savannah's historic district and caused an explosion that blew off manhole covers, spewed flames into the air, and blacked out much of downtown for hours. A similar explosion two blocks away rattled office buildings August 15. Georgia Power blames 50 to 80-year-old cables in the underground network. Two years ago, it began a \$51 million project to replace 80 miles of buried cable downtown. After the latest explosion December 29, the utility announced last week plans to finish installing the new cables by 2012 — half the time originally projected. Still, the back-to-back explosions prompted the mayor and city manager to press Georgia Power for short-term fixes to reduce the chance of another blast before the cable upgrade is completed.

Source: <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/28583256/>

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Chemical Industry Sector

3. *January 12, Associated Press* – (Ohio) **Train derails in NW Ohio no longer a threat.** Authorities say they are no longer concerned about hazardous chemicals in tanker cars that derailed in northwest Ohio. A sergeant with the State Highway Patrol says two cars that toppled over in rural Defiance were empty and contained residue from ethyl alcohol, a flammable industrial chemical. The derailment sparked a small fire that was put out quickly. No one was injured or evacuated. He said 15 cars of a 72-car westbound train jumped the tracks. He says the train included tanker cars filled with sodium hydroxide, but they remained upright. Nearby U.S. Route 24 will remain closed until January 13, forcing traffic to be diverted from the heavily traveled route between Toledo and Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Source: <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/huff-wires/20090112/train-derailment/>

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Nuclear Reactors, Materials, and Waste Sector

4. *January 12, Reuters* – (Vermont) **Entergy Vermont Yankee reactor back at full power.** Entergy Corp's 620-megawatt Vermont Yankee nuclear power station ramped up to full power by early Monday, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) said in a report. On January 9, the unit was operating at 47 percent of capacity so workers could fix a small water leak in the feed water system, which supplies water to the steam generator.

Source:

<http://www.reuters.com/article/rbssIndustryMaterialsUtilitiesNews/idUSN1231128120090112>

5. *January 10, Clemson Bureau* – (South Carolina) **Fleeting power loss at Oconee Nuclear concerns NRC.** A maintenance procedure during a scheduled refueling outage at Oconee Nuclear Station near Greenville, South Carolina, triggered a brief power loss and U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) concern, although Duke Energy denied any danger. NRC and Duke officials will meet January 22 to discuss the brief loss of power that interrupted cooling at Oconee's Unit 1 reactor. A Duke spokeswoman said the 1.8-second loss of power that occurred while the reactor was shut down April 15 did not create a safety concern; however, preliminary NRC findings differ. The situation was "related to the apparent failure to implement an adequate maintenance procedure," and a preliminary evaluation determined that it "has more than very low safety significance," according to an NRC statement January 9.

Source:

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/article/20090110/NEWS01/901100326/1069/YOURUPSTATE01>

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Defense Industrial Base Sector

6. *January 10, Tampa Bay Online* – (Florida) **Size of Raytheon plume challenged.** An underground plume of industrial chemicals has spread farther than previously thought and is contaminating the air inside homes, according to new filings in a federal class-action lawsuit. The findings come from two experts working for homeowners in the Azalea area who are suing defense contractor Raytheon, owner of the plant from which the chemicals originated. The new reports are at odds with earlier findings from Raytheon and state health officials, who say the plume holds no health risk for residents. The company estimates the spread of the plume at about a half mile around the plant site. In court filings last week, one expert for the plaintiffs, of Rice University in Houston, said the plume is actually about 1 mile long by 1.7 miles wide. The expert based his analysis on data previously collected by Arcadis and on 29 new samples from locations tested by Fugro Consultants, which is working for the homeowners. He attributes the discrepancy in findings to different methods of measuring chemical waste from the Raytheon site. Fugro, essentially, was using a finer measuring stick than Arcadis, he said in the report. The plume has contaminated dozens of residential irrigation wells in the area.

Source: <http://www2.tbo.com/content/2009/jan/10/na-size-of-raytheon-plume-challenged/>

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Banking and Finance Sector

7. *January 12, Reuters* – (National) **FDIC faces \$10 bln IndyMac loan exposure –**

paper. The Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. (FDIC) may be facing up to \$10 billion in previously unknown liabilities tied to mortgages failed lender IndyMac sold to Fannie Mae, the New York Post said. Such a liability to the FDIC's \$34.6 billion insurance fund would leave the agency less able to deal with the number of bank failures expected this year, the paper said. The FDIC agreed on January 2 to sell IndyMac's assets to a consortium of private equity and hedge fund firms, including Dune Capital Management and J.C. Flowers & Co. The FDIC, which has run IndyMac since its failure on July 11, undertook as part of the deal to share losses on a portfolio of IndyMac loans.

Source: <http://www.reuters.com/article/privateEquity/idUSBNG10892720090112>

8. *January 10, Champaign News Gazette* – (Illinois) **Police warn of text message scam.** Police in Champaign, Illinois, are investigating an ongoing text message scam that attempts to get the receiver to provide their account number. Dozens were sent out about 7:30 p.m. January 9 to area residents. The message, which appears to be from a local bank, advises the recipient that their card has been deactivated. To reactivate their card, the recipient is told to call a phone number and provide their account number and pin number. The information is used to fraudulently remove funds from the recipient's account.

Source: http://www.news-gazette.com/news/local/2009/01/10/police_warn_of_text_message_scam

9. *January 10, Oshkosh Northwestern* – (Wisconsin) **Police warn of text message scam.** Police in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, are warning residents not to respond to text messages appearing January 10 on area cell phones purporting to be from Associated Bank. The message asks recipients to "Please verify your Associated Bank account (unusual activity)," and directs the recipient to call a toll-free number. The Winneconne police chief said his department has been deluged with calls from people concerned about the message. He said the message is a scam designed to collect account information.

Source:

<http://www.thenorthwestern.com/article/20090110/OSH0101/901100330/1128/OSH01>

10. *January 9, MarketWatch* – (National) **Changes urged in doling out of \$700 billion bailout.** A key lawmaker called on January 9 for Congress to impose stricter requirements on how the government uses the second half of a \$700 billion financial bailout fund as a separate oversight panel blasted the handling of the first half. The House Financial Services Committee chairman detailed legislation that would condition the release of the second half of the bailout funds on a number of changes, including a series of restrictions on executive compensation, requiring more monitoring and accountability on banks, and imposing more conditions on auto companies receiving funds. The chairman also said the bill would direct more help to small banks, and that he expects the measure would redirect much of the capital infusion by the government away from the larger financial institutions.

Source: <http://www.marketwatch.com/news/story/changes-urged-doling-out-financial/story.aspx?guid={E5CE2612-1B2E-40EB-A2BF-EE9C9FF4FA20}>

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Transportation Sector

11. *January 12, Associated Press* – (Northeast) **Northern Plains face frigid storm; en route east.** Parts of the Midwest and Northeast were trying to handle up to a foot of snow that caused two large vehicle pileups — a 59-vehicle crash in New Hampshire and another in Connecticut that involved 13 vehicles. There were at least four weekend traffic fatalities. Most residents in New England heeded the authorities' warnings to stay off roads after the storm dumped up to 9 inches of snow in some areas in Massachusetts and sleet and freezing rain across Rhode Island. Some communities declared snow emergencies to help cleanup crews plow streets. In New Hampshire, three buses and two tractor-trailer rigs were among 59 vehicles that crashed on snowy Interstate 93, sending a dozen people to hospitals Sunday morning and temporarily shutting down a stretch of the highway's northbound lanes. None of the injuries were life threatening, but it took emergency crews about an hour to remove one man from a car wedged under the back of a tractor trailer, the Derry Fire Battalion chief said. A car that slid on ice caused a 13-car pileup Sunday afternoon near Greenwich, Connecticut, sending two people to the hospital and closing the northbound side of Interstate 95 for two hours. Police said no serious injuries were reported.

Source:

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5hdfYoRVgnamswaB90dOpg0971IIwD95LIIT00>

12. *January 11, New York Times* – (International) **200 people missing as ferry sinks in Indonesia.** More than 200 people are missing and feared dead after a passenger ferry sank in high seas off the coast of the Indonesian island of Sulawesi on Sunday morning, the police and government officials said. The ferry had been carrying about 250 passengers and 17 crew members. A fishing boat found 18 survivors, including the captain, who had been drifting on life rafts for hours in rough seas. The captain later told officials that 100 or more people had jumped off the boat in panic before it sank, but he said he did not know what had happened to them. A port official in Parepare, where the ferry first departed late Saturday afternoon, said that rescuers had been dispatched, but were having trouble reaching the scene because of bad weather. The Indonesian archipelago has the largest area of territorial waters in the world. Ferries are a necessary form of transportation, but poor safety standards and overcrowding cause numerous accidents every year.

Source: <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/12/world/asia/12ferry.html>

13. *January 11, CNN* – (Florida) **Pilot missing after plane goes down in Florida.** Rescue workers have not found the pilot of a six-seater plane that crashed Sunday night in the Florida Panhandle, authorities said. Officials with the Federal Aviation Administration were expected to begin an investigation Monday. The pilot was alone in the corporate aircraft when he took off and his plane does not have an ejection feature, said the manager of Anderson Municipal Airport in Anderson, Indiana, where the plane took off. Sunday night, the pilot contacted air traffic controllers and told them the plane's windshield had imploded and that he was bleeding profusely, said a Santa Rosa County Sheriff's Office sergeant. That call came in when the Piper PA-46 was about 35 miles

southwest of Birmingham, Alabama. Controllers tried to tell the pilot to divert the flight to Pell City, Alabama, but he did not respond. The plane appeared to have been put on autopilot around 2,000 feet, the sergeant said.

Source: <http://www.cnn.com/2009/US/01/12/florida.plane.crash/index.html>

14. *January 9, Associated Press* – (Washington) **Highways open, flood threat lessens in W. Wash.** Drier weather and falling river levels on Friday gave thousands of flooded Western Washington residents and business operators a chance to start assessing damage and cleaning up. Road and rail crews reopened most critical transportation links. A 20-mile stretch of Interstate 5 at Chehalis, closed since Wednesday by high water, reopened at noon Friday to truck traffic. Crews also had Interstate 90 through Snoqualmie Pass open in both directions by noon. U.S. 2 across Stevens Pass was opened Thursday. The other major route across the Cascades, U.S. 12 across White Pass, had reopened to local traffic only but a section was closed Friday for slide removal. Freight train service returned to normal Friday on north-south tracks in Western Washington after crews removed mud and debris along the lines. Limited Amtrak passenger train service both north and south of Seattle resumed Saturday afternoon.

Source:

http://seattletimes.nwsources.com/html/localnews/2008611803_apwanorthwestfloodingglance4thldwritethru.html

15. *January 9, WTOP 103.5 Washington* – (District of Columbia) **Metro Red Line trains delayed after cracked rail.** Riders faced heavy delays in both directions on Metro's Red Line Friday afternoon. Trains were sharing the track between Woodley Park-Zoo and Van Ness-UDC stations due to a report of a cracked rail at Woodley Park-Zoo. Riders were told to factor in an additional 30-40 minutes to get to their destination, Metro tells WTOP. Repairs continued through the night.

Source: <http://wtopnews.com/index.php?nid=25&sid=1569322>

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Postal and Shipping Sector

16. *January 11, KOVR 13 Sacramento* – (California) **Two UC Davis researchers receive bomb threats.** Radical animal rights activists have threatened to send letter bombs to two University of California at Davis researchers, according to authorities. The group has reportedly carried out a bombing in the past. An online posting by a group calling itself the Revolutionary Cells Animal Liberation Brigade identified the two university researchers by name on Saturday night, saying that they had sent them a nasty surprise through the mail. The threat accuses the two researchers at the California National Primate Research Center of torturing primates. UC Davis security is on high alert. The group that made the threat is the same group that claimed responsibility for bombing an Emeryville building and a failed car bombing attempt on a UCLA professor. No suspicious packages have been found in either researcher's mailbox, and one of the researchers said his mail is being screened at the post office. Other researchers at the Primate Center have been warned to be careful when opening their mail.

Source: <http://cbs13.com/local/letter.bomb.threats.2.905783.html>

Agriculture and Food Sector

17. *January 11, Wall Street Journal* – (Minnesota; Ohio) **Peanut butter suspected in Salmonella outbreak.** An Ohio company recalled its creamy peanut butter after Minnesota health authorities identified the sandwich spread as the likely source of a wave of salmonella infections in the state. Minnesota investigators found that every one of the 30 people with recent salmonella infections in that state had eaten peanut butter before falling ill, and confirmed in the “overwhelming majority” of those cases that the victims had eaten King Nut brand, according to a state Department of Health spokesman. The Minnesota salmonella strain matches the bacteria that have sickened at least 369 people in 41 other states since early September, although Minnesota authorities have not connected the peanut butter to the national outbreak. King Nut said it had purchased the peanut butter from Peanut Corp. of America of Lynchburg, Virginia, and sold it under the King Nut and Parnell’s Pride brands. King Nut distributed it to universities, restaurants, hospitals, and other institutional food services. The company said the contamination was in an open container “in a large, institutional kitchen,” raising the possibility of cross-contamination.

Source:

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB123172133257172179.html?mod=googlenews_wsj

Water Sector

18. *January 11, Rapid City Journal* – (South Dakota) **Residents notified of radioactive water tests.** Box Elder residents should receive notices within the next week alerting them to the presence of radium, a naturally occurring type of radioactive metal, in one of the city’s two water wells, the mayor of Box Elder said. Box Elder’s notice stems from a violation that occurred this summer, when high levels of radium 226 and radium 228 were detected during a routine test of a new well. The well has since passed another quarterly test, he said. After a water system fails a water test, the system is considered in violation of the standards. To bring a water system into compliance takes four quarterly tests with an annual average that is below the standard.

Source:

<http://www.rapidcityjournal.com/articles/2009/01/11/news/local/doc496955c7a0c73637078677.txt>

19. *January 10, KSNW 3 Wichita* – (Kansas) **Argonia residents warned about drinking water.** Argonia residents are being warned about the city’s water. The Kansas Department of Health and Environment has informed the city that it is in violation of the levels of nitrates in its drinking water. They are asking that no one under the age of six months, nursing, or pregnant drink that water. The water was tested at the beginning of the month and was found in violation for the second time.

Source: <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/28583304/>

20. *January 9, Water Technology Online* – (Wyoming) **Drill rig seen as cause of city well contamination.** Officials and residents in Sundance, Wyoming, are awaiting results of the most recent testing done on the municipal water system after diesel from a water well drilling rig seeped into an underground aquifer used for drinking, according to local reports. The contaminated well was shut down January 4 after the incident. The first test results, which were received January 6, indicated the presence of diesel in the well water. The Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality's water quality division was continuing to sample the water, reported the Casper Star-Tribune on January 7. Officials told the Star-Tribune that they believed the diesel came from equipment that was drilling a new water well in a well field located about 4 miles outside the Sundance town limits. According to the Crook County Emergency Management Coordinator, the diesel went through a fracture and got into an aquifer.

Source: http://watertechonline.com/news.asp?N_ID=71225

21. *January 9, Water Technology Online* – (Washington) **Sewage overflows plague Bellingham, WA.** Officials in Bellingham, Washington, are saying that a wastewater treatment system overtaxed by the region's massive flooding has led to an undetermined amount of sewage being discharged into Bellingham Bay, the Bellingham Herald reported on January 8. An overflow facility along C Street released wastewater into the bay via a 96-inch-diameter pipe. The acting director of Bellingham Public Works said he does not know how much of the discharge was sewage, and officials do not test the effluent prior to discharge.

Source: http://watertechonline.com/news.asp?N_ID=71223

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Public Health and Healthcare Sector

22. *January 12, Associated Press* – (Florida) **NO gets hospital expansion, but is it enough?** Ochsner Health System is opening a new emergency department in New Orleans on Monday, but some officials worry the city still lacks enough health care services. The expansion is part of \$12 million in improvements to the campus that housed Memorial Medical Center before Hurricane Katrina. The department will have two trauma rooms, nine exam rooms, and one triage room. The hospital's intensive care unit will expand and there will be more rooms. But some medical professionals say health care infrastructure is not fully recovered from Katrina.

Source: http://www.wxvt.com/Global/story.asp?S=9655408&nav=menu1344_2

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Government Facilities Sector

23. *January 12, USA Today* – (National) **Unemployment claims jam states' websites, phone lines.** Record numbers of people filing unemployment claims have crashed computer systems in states struggling to keep up with the demand. Web sites and call centers have been overwhelmed in California, New York, Ohio, Michigan, Missouri,

Colorado, Kentucky, and North Carolina. “Many states do not have the infrastructure in place to respond better to the crisis,” says the executive director of the National Association of State Workforce Agencies. The director says the federal government budgeted \$2.45 billion this year for the states’ cost of processing claims, \$546 million less than what states say they need to update their systems.

Source: http://www.usatoday.com/tech/news/2009-01-11-unemployment_N.htm

24. *January 11, Associated Press* – (International) **Gaza protests target U.S. Consulate in Pakistan.** Security forces used tear gas and batons to repel anti-Israel protesters who tried to attack a U.S. Consulate in Pakistan January 11, as tens of thousands in Europe, the Middle East, and Asia demonstrated against Israel’s offensive in Gaza. Some 2,000 protesters in the Pakistani port city of Karachi burned U.S. flags and chanted anti-Israel slogans, and several hundred of them marched on the U.S. Consulate, a senior police official said. “They were in a mood to attack,” he said. “They were carrying bricks, stones and clubs.” A U.S. Embassy spokesman in Islamabad said the protesters did not get close to the Consulate, which was closed January 11. A protest in Brussels, Belgium, that drew 30,000 turned violent as well, with demonstrators overturning cars and smashing shop windows. In Manila, Philippines, policemen used shields to disperse students protesting outside the U.S. Embassy. And in Edinburgh, United Kingdom, shoes and paint bombs were thrown at the U.S. Consulate as thousands of protesters marched through the capital of Scotland to demonstrate.

Source:

http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5h_spSjn_nNjUPox9jhhVCKsdnH9AD95LC0C80

See also: <http://edinburghnews.scotsman.com/topstories/US-consulate-pelted-with-shoes.4865201.jp>

25. *January 9, Associated Press* – (Maryland) **Teen pleads guilty for role in building explosives.** A Rockville teen has pleaded guilty to charges for his role in building explosives in a case that involved a map of Camp David. The state’s attorney says the defendant issued the plea January 9 in Montgomery County Circuit Court on two counts of manufacturing or possession of destructive devices, one count of unauthorized use of a computer, and one count of theft less than \$100. The defendant admitted helping a school mate build and detonate pipe bombs. The defendant also obtained letterhead from the police department to try to access police equipment.

Source: <http://www.wtop.com/?nid=25&sid=1569340>

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Emergency Services Sector

26. *January 11, Gloucester Daily Times* – (Massachusetts) **Lack of VMS code slowed Coast Guard.** The commander of Coast Guard Sector Boston said Saturday that the start of rescue efforts for the doomed fishing boat Patriot and its crew was delayed by an inability to access computerized tracking records in the vessel monitoring system. Although the VMS is primarily used for law enforcement, the Coast Guard in Boston has used it for search-and-rescue efforts. In November, facile use of VMS data

contributed to the rescue of three fishermen from a boat at sea off New Bedford. She said that, to find the Patriot, Sector Boston command personnel made “several” unsuccessful attempts to pull from the VMS computer system the last radio-beamed location of the steel hulled, 54-foot boat. Eventually, she said, the sector watchstander called for help from the first district command center, which is also in Boston but at a different location. The Patriot sank in the early-morning hours of January 3.

Source:

http://www.gloucestertimes.com/punews/local_story_011232528.html?keyword=secondarystory

27. *January 11, United Press International* – (Florida) **Sick firefighters blame chemical in pants.** A firefighter in Boca Raton, Florida, alleges he and others in his department were slowly poisoned by the fire-resistant material in their pants. Of 36 Boca Raton firefighters tested for the chemical antimony, 30 were found to have elevated levels of the heavy metal. Antimony is related to arsenic and a key ingredient in the FireWear pants the firefighters were required to wear as part of their daily uniforms for more than 15 years, the Palm Beach Post reported Sunday. While the makers of the pants say there is no hard evidence the pants were to blame, the city has asked the U.S. Centers for Disease Control to investigate, the Post reported.

Source:

http://www.upi.com/Top_News/2009/01/11/Sick_firefighters_blame_chemical_in_pants/UPI-42031231691796/

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Information Technology

28. *January 12, ComputerWeekly* – (International) **Experts reveal 25 coding errors that let in hackers.** International security organizations have unveiled a list of 25 common programming errors that cause security vulnerabilities and expose IT users to cyber attack. Nine of the errors involve insecure interaction between software components, nine relate to risky resource management, and seven deals with access control. The U.S.-funded collaboration project is managed by the Mitre and Sans Institute and brings together security experts from more than 30 global organizations. The project is aimed at helping software producers to code more securely by focusing on actual errors and providing information on how to avoid them. The project will also enable end user organizations to get suppliers to certify their code is free of these programming errors. The Sans Institute said it was shocking that most of these common security errors are not understood by programmers. Programmers are not widely taught to avoid these errors and commercial software producers seldom check for them.

Source: <http://www.computerweekly.com/Articles/2009/01/12/234179/experts-reveal-25-coding-errors-that-let-in-hackers.htm>

29. *January 9, ZDNet* – (International) **Firefox team stops collecting data to ensure user privacy.** The Firefox team decided this week to stop collecting unique identifiers that link crash reports from the same user. During the somewhat heated debate during an extended session of its weekly meeting, opponents said the practice violates user

privacy, while proponents say having the data visible could help them fix bugs and solve bottlenecks faster — even though they claim to have never used it before. Opponents won the debate by arguing that user privacy trumps any development issue. After the meeting, an engineering chief summed up the issue this way: “The discussion at the end of the meeting was around what data we should and shouldn’t be collecting with crash reports, whether or not that data becomes publicly visible on our Crash Reporter developer website,” the engineer wrote in response to questions submitted by ZDNet. “The questions in the discussion centered around the value in keeping unique identifiers that allow us to associate two crashes from the same user. While there is value in being able to do this easily, the potential cost to user privacy felt high, and so some were arguing that we shouldn’t have the crash reporter client on user’s machines send these unique identifiers,” he wrote. “That argument prevailed, and the change will be made such that unique identifiers will no longer be sent. We’ll also purge the database of the ones we’ve collected (but not actually even used) to date and instead find new ways of drawing the correlations required for data analysis which don’t have as high a risk to user privacy.”

Source: <http://blogs.zdnet.com/open-source/?p=3274>

Internet Alert Dashboard

To report cyber infrastructure incidents or to request information, please contact US-CERT at soc@us-cert.gov or visit their Website: <http://www.us-cert.gov>.

Information on IT information sharing and analysis can be found at the IT ISAC (Information Sharing and Analysis Center) Website: <https://www.it-isac.org/>.

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Communications Sector

Nothing to report

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Commercial Facilities Sector

Nothing to report

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National Monuments & Icons Sector

30. *January 11, Los Angeles Times* – (California) **Southern California winds have fire officials on alert.** Santa Ana winds left Southern California skies sunny and blue Saturday but kept firefighting strike teams on the lookout for any hint of fire as brush-covered hillsides quickly dried out in rising temperatures. No major brush fires were reported in the region by Saturday night. A red-flag warning issued by the National Weather Service for Los Angeles and Ventura counties was expected to persist until

about 4 p.m. Sunday, when temperatures were expected to reach the low 80s in some places. A meteorologist for the weather service said there had been gusts as strong as 60 to 70 mph in the Angeles National Forest, the Sylmar area, and the Malibu Hills. But winds were expected to weaken Sunday night and into Monday, with gusts dropping to 35 mph in the foothills and mountains.

Source: <http://www.latimes.com/news/printedition/california/la-me-winds11-2009jan11,0,3455174.story>

31. *January 11, Fire Fighting News* – (California) **Homeowner pays \$1 million for accidentally starting a wildfire.** This week, the U.S. Department of Justice approved a \$1 million settlement with a homeowner from North Fork, east of Madera, whose attempt to sharpen a wood splitter with an electric grinder sparked a fire in the Sierra National Forest that burned more than 4,100 acres. The settlement marks a new chapter in the Federal Government’s intensive push to collect damages from individuals or businesses whose actions touch off costly forest fires. California also is bolstering its efforts with new state money dedicated to a fire cost recovery team. Last year, the Eastern District — whose sweeping territory includes more than 16 million acres of national forest, or 8.3 percent of the nation’s total — was one of three districts to receive special federal funding for designated “fire recovery litigation teams.” The other teams are located in California’s Central District, based in Los Angeles and in Utah. “We look at it as a fire prevention tool,” said the chief of law enforcement for Cal Fire.

Source: <http://www.firefightingnews.com/article-US.cfm?articleID=60210>

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Dams Sector

32. *January 11, Tulsa World* – (Oklahoma) **Need for dam inspections growing.** Dozens of Oklahoma’s potentially deadly dams had not been inspected within the state-mandated one-year period, data show. Some of those dams do not have a state-required emergency action plan, a Tulsa World analysis found. Such plans highlight possible dangers and outline steps to protect residents in case of a breach. Although most of Oklahoma’s dams are low-hazard dams and would cause no deaths and little economic problems if they failed, monitoring even remote dams is becoming increasingly important. Not only are Oklahoma’s dams aging — more than 400 were built before 1950 — but also communities are springing up downstream from some of them, placing people and property in their paths. Meanwhile, Oklahoma, like many other states, is struggling to keep up with inspections and maintenance because its dam safety program is understaffed, said the chairman of the legislative committee for the Association of State Dam Safety Officials. Oklahoma, data show, has one of the worst employee-to-dam ratios. Despite having some of the highest dam numbers in the nation, the Oklahoma Water Resources Board has among the fewest dam safety employees. Water Resources Board employees rarely inspect dams, but they must review permits, designs, maintenance reports, and inspection data, among other responsibilities. It is up to a dam’s owners, most of whom are private citizens, to have the structures inspected by a certified engineer. In all, 934 of the state’s 4,477 dams — about 21 percent — had not been checked within their most recent inspection cycle, according to December data

from the Water Resources Board and the Oklahoma Conservation Commission. Most were low-hazard dams that need to be checked once every five years.

Source:

http://www.tulsaworld.com/news/article.aspx?subjectid=11&articleid=20090111_11_A1_Geesin605016

33. *January 10, New Orleans Times-Picayune* – (Louisiana) **Corps ready to launch \$4 billion in flood protection projects.** The Army Corps of Engineers will unleash more than \$4 billion in contracts for construction of levee and drainage projects this year, which should make the region safer and provide a massive jolt to the local economy. “The 113 contracts for the hurricane and storm-damage risk-reduction system will be the largest number we award in any given year,” said the operations officer for Task Force Hope. “It’s going to be a huge year. ... (We) are executing one of the biggest sets of construction projects the corps has ever seen down here.” In addition to the \$4 billion in flood-protection contracts — all for the New Orleans region — federal and state coastal restoration projects totaling close to \$1 billion are also expected to start construction this year. And Corps, state, and local officials are already jockeying for a share of a huge national economic stimulus package being proposed by the President-elect. The contracts represent a large proportion of the ongoing effort to construct a flood-protection system capable of protecting against so-called “100-year” storms. The Corps expects to meet its goal of providing a 100-year level of protection by 2011.

Source:

http://www.nola.com/news/index.ssf/2009/01/corps_ready_to_launch_4_billio.html

34. *January 10, Everett Herald* – (Washington) **Flood damage likely to surpass \$20 million.** Damage from widespread flooding in Snohomish County is expected to exceed \$20 million, county officials said Friday. A U.S. Senator from Washington said the devastation caused by the flooding makes a case that federal money for improving the economy and enhancing the nation’s infrastructure also must be directed toward shoring up the levees that protect people and businesses in communities along rivers. Levees restraining the river might have been soaking in floodwaters for more than 50 hours. The county’s emergency management director said emergency crews plan to continue to keep close watch on the Snohomish River, concerned that the levees may be worked beyond their capacities. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers continued Friday to work on repairing a hole the size of a small house in a dike on Ebey Island. Workers trucked in rock and built earthworks, trying to contain floodwaters.

Source: <http://enterprisene newspapers.com/article/20090110/NEWS01/701109904/0/ETP>

35. *January 9, Charleston Gazette* – (West Virginia) **W.Va. coal-ash dams seldom inspected, DEP says.** Most of the coal-ash impoundments in West Virginia have not been examined by a state dam safety inspector for at least five years, according to data released by the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). West Virginia has at least 16 ash impoundments in six counties, according to a preliminary DEP review of dam safety records. The three sites with the most storage capacity are Allegheny Power’s McElroy’s Run Dam in Pleasants County, American Electric Power’s Conner Run Dam in Marshall County, and AEP’s John Amos Fly Ash Dam in Putnam County.

Some of the facilities have gone more than 20 years without a government inspection, according to the DEP data. Coal-ash dams are under new scrutiny, following the December 22 failure of an Eastern Tennessee dike that sent more than 1 billion gallons of wet coal ash pouring over 300 acres of homes, fields, and streams. Under federal and state strip mine laws, government officials inspect coal-slurry impoundments monthly. But coal-ash dumps are exempt from the 1977 Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act. In West Virginia, power plant ash dams are covered by the state Dam Safety Act. Source: <http://sundaygazettemail.com/News/200901090398>

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